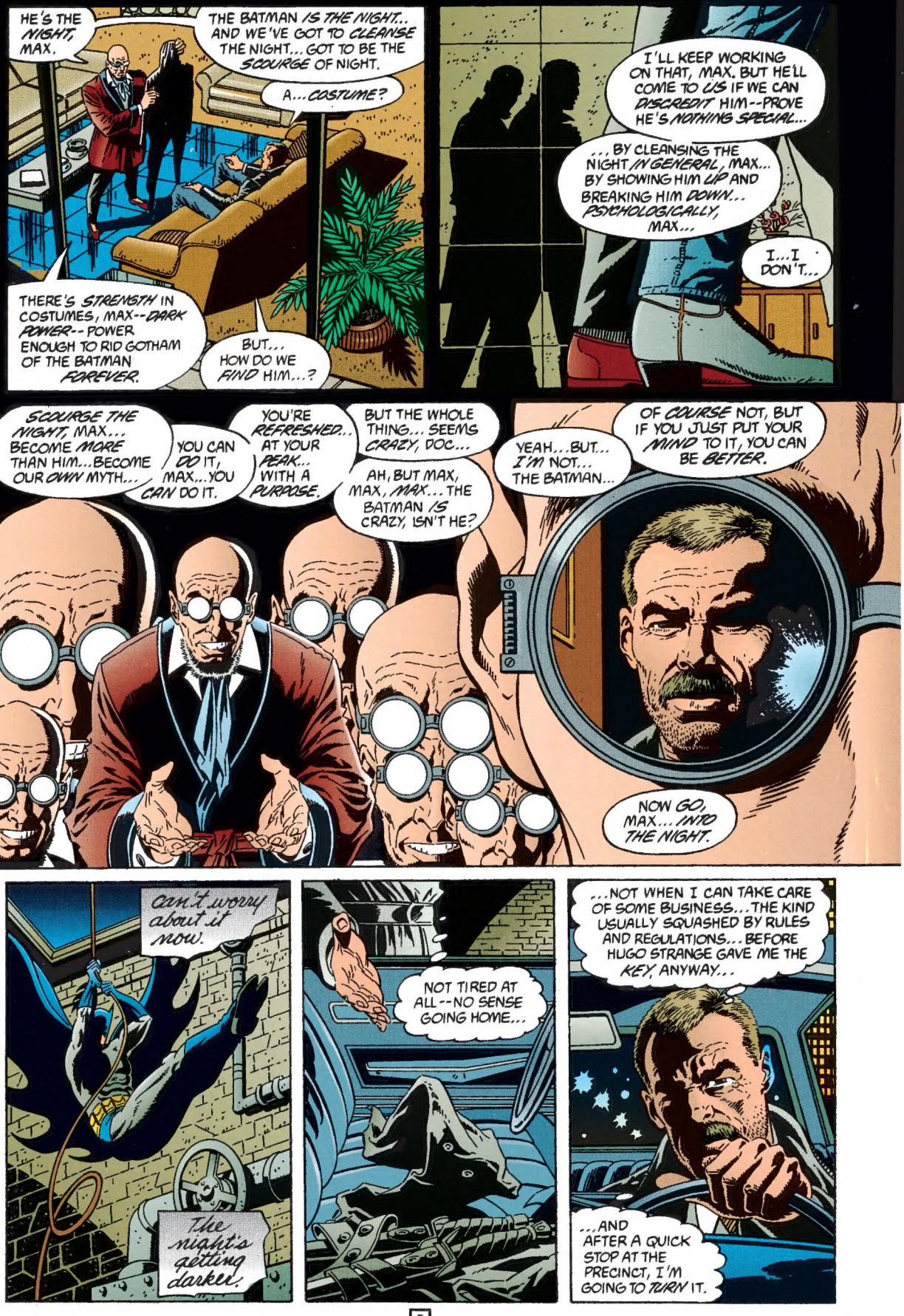
BATMAN.
LEGENDS OF THE
DARK KNIGHT®
NO 13 DEC 90
150 CAN 185
P·R·E·Y™
DOUG MOENCH • PAUL GULACY • TERRY AUSTIN
PART THREE OF FIVE

--AND SO, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING MY REMARKS ON THE NEWS BROADCAST, YOUR FATHER INVITED ME TO BECOME A CONSULTANT FOR HIS NEWLY FORMED VIGILANTE TASK FORCE.
AN OBVIOUS CHOICE, OF COURSE, CONSIDERING MY PREEMINENT POSITION AMONG GOTHAM PSYCHOANALYSTS...
...INDEED, I MUST SAY, CATHERINE, THE ONLY CHOICE.
I HAVE, YOU SEE, ALREADY MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD UNCOVERING THE ACTUAL IDENTITY OF THE SO-CALLED BAT-MAN, AND--
PLEASE, DR. STRANGE... MY FATHER'S AFFAIRS AS MAYOR DO NOT CONCERN ME.
PERHAPS IF WE COULD TALK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE FOR A WHILE...?
OH, I'M BORING YOU, IS THAT IT?
OUR DATE IS NOT GOING WELL, IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO TELL ME?
IF YOU WANT THE TRUTH, DOCTOR, I ACCEPTED THIS DINNER "DATE" SOLELY AS A COURTESY--AND BECAUSE YOU HAPPEN TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH MY FATHER.
WHAT I WOULD PREFER, DR. STRANGE, IS TO BE TAKEN HOME.
WHY, OF ALL THE RUDE, IMPERTINENT...
OH, REALLY? AND AFTER YOUR EARLIER DEFENSE OF HIM, I SUPPOSE YOU'D PREFER A NIGHT ON THE TOWN WITH THE BAT-MAN HIMSELF!
FINE, LITTLE MISS CATHERINE!
FINE... FOR NOW.

CORT--
FOR YOU--
LINE THREE.
YEAH, THIS IS SGT. MAX CORT..
OH, IT'S YOU.
NOW? HEY, IT'S LATE AND I WAS JUST ON MY WAY OU--
WHAT?
OH, ALL RIGHT--BE RIGHT OVER.
SHE THINKS SHE SNUBBED ME, BUT SHE'S NOT THE ONLY FISH TO BE HAD... TYPICAL FOR HER TYPE... REPRESSED, TERRIFIED OF ATTACHMENTS...
HER TYPE NEVER GIVES ME A CHANCE, BECAUSE THEY KNOW A MAN LIKE ME WOULD PIERCE THEIR ARMOR!
BUT WHY SHOULD I CARE?
SHE WAS JUST A TRIFLE-- AND THE FAITHFUL SGT. CORT IS ON HIS WAY RIGHT NOW...
TIME TO GET BACK TO REAL OBSESSIONS ANYWAY.
I can't function like this--wary of every shadow, more concerned about the police than the ones I hunt.
The situation is unworkable--a mess.
Even the streets are getting smaller, closing in on me...
I HOPE THIS IS ABOUT THE "BETTER IDEA" YOU CLAIM TO HAVE-- JUST MAKE IT FAST, STRANGE, 'CAUSE I'M BEAT.
OH? THEN PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE ME TO HYPNOTIZE YOU...
HUH? WHAT FOR?
WHY, JUST TO HELP YOU RELAX, SERGEANT... TO REFRESH YOU.
I DUNNO.
NEVER MUCH LIKED THE IDEA OF THAT HYPNOTISM STUFF.
THERE ARE MANY MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT HYPNOTISM, BUT I ASSURE YOU--IT CANNOT FORCE ANYONE TO DO ANYTHING COUNTER TO THEIR TRUE WILL OR WHICH VIOLATES THEIR BASIC MORALITY.

I AIN'T AFRAID OF THAT. IT'S JUST--
OH, COME, COME, MAX, JUST LEAN BACK AND GET COMFORTABLE.
IT'LL HELP YOU FOCUS ON WHAT I WISH TO TELL YOU, THAT'S ALL.
NOW JUST IMAGINE A SOFT PLEASANT LIGHT IN THE DISTANCE... SAY, THE FULL MOON ON A WARM SUMMER'S NIGHT... JUST PICTURE IT IN YOUR MIND AND RELAX AS YOU LISTEN TO THE SOUND OF MY VOICE...
JUST MY SOFT VOICE...
"...AND THE MOON..."
Gordon is the key.
I need to think--come up with a plan...
...something Gordon would be willing to back...
GOTHAM GAZETTE
BATMAN AND CAT-BURGLAR: PARTNERS IN CRIME?
...if it isn't already too late.
ARE YOU STILL VISUALIZING THE MOON, MAX?
YEAH...
A PEACEFUL SIGHT, ISN'T IT? ALMOST ENCHANTED...
YEAH... BIG... SILVER...
AND ARE YOU RELAXED NOW, MAX? ABLE TO CONCENTRATE BETTER?
Y-YEAH... FEELS... GOOD...
EXCELLENT... BECAUSE WE'RE GETTING CLOSE, MAX... AND YOU'LL NEED TO BE IN TOP SHAPE...
THESE POLICE FILES YOU GAVE ME-- THE ONES GORDON TRIED TO HOLD BACK...
THEY'VE BEEN VERY HELPFUL, MAX... AS HAVE YOUR OWN INVESTIGATIONS...
...PARTICULARLY THE LAB ANALYSIS OF THE RETRIEVED "BAT-WING HARNESS"...

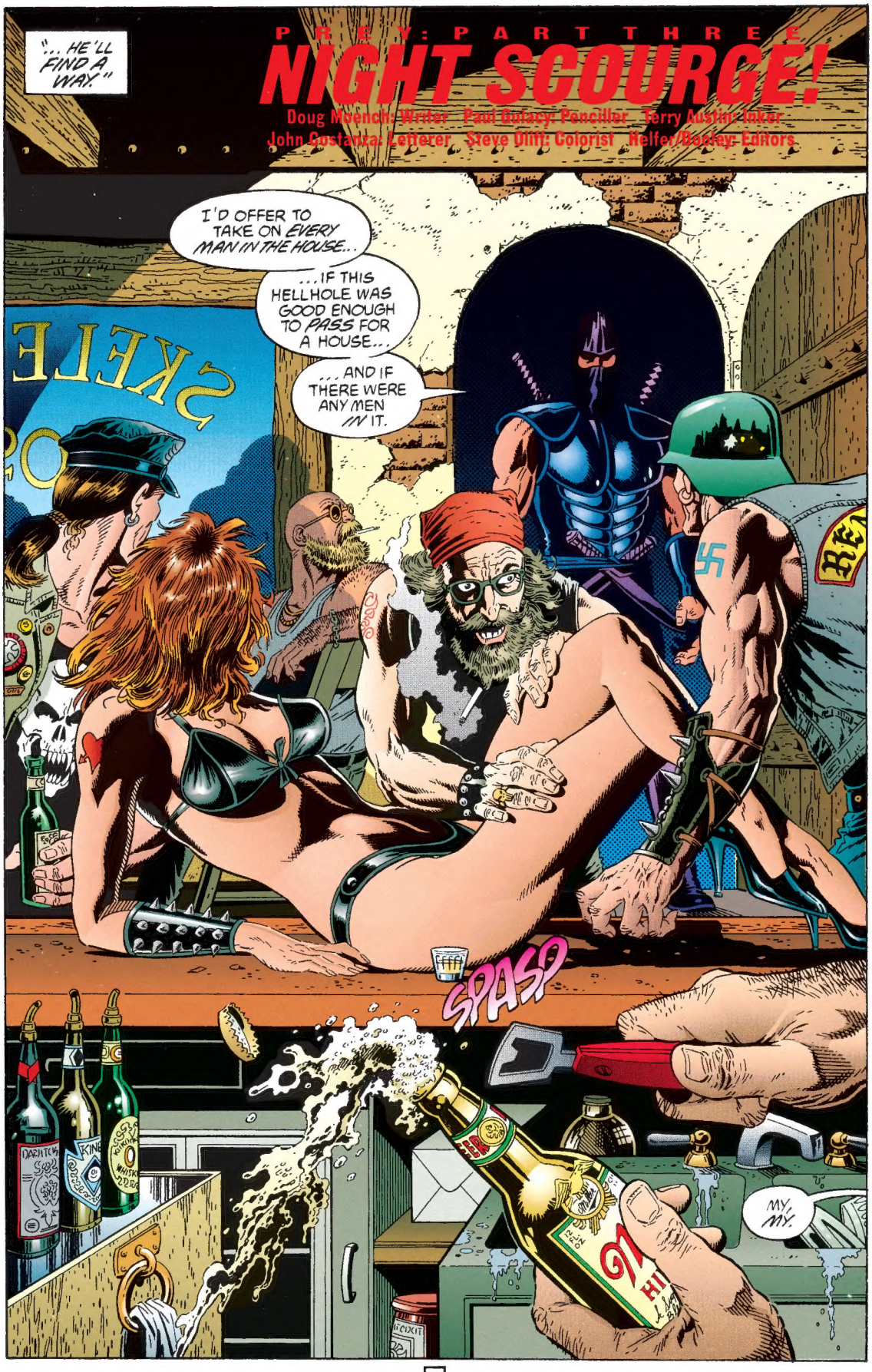
THE STRUTS ARE COMPOSED OF NEWLY DEVELOPED LIGHTWEIGHT PLASTIC, CUSTOM MADE AND EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE, MAX...
YEAH...?
PLUS, THE MAN HAS TO SLEEP SOMETIME, SO IT'S UNLIKELY HE HAS A DAY JOB...
THEN... HE'S SOME... RICH GUY...
VERY GOOD, MAX...
BUT THAT'S ONLY ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS LISTED ON THE PROFILE I'VE DRAWN UP...
"THERE'S MUCH MORE TO IT...
"... THE BATMAN IS AN INDEPENDENTLY WEALTHY MAN OVER TWENTY AND PROBABLY UNDER THIRTY YEARS OF AGE, SINGLE, NO DOUBT LIVING ALONE, AND PROBABLY A WIDOWER, HIS WIFE A VICTIM OF BRUTAL CRIME.
"HE IS ALSO AN ACCOMPLISHED ATHLETE, AT LEAST ON THE COLLEGIATE OR AMATEUR LEVEL..."
THERE'S JUST ONE PROBLEM, MAX-- THE LACK OF ANY CORRELATION BETWEEN MY PROFILE AND THE POLICE RECORDS OF MUGGING AND MURDER VICTIMS DURING THE LAST FIVE YEARS.
HE'S RICH, MAX AND HE PROBABLY PAID THEM OFF.
WHATEVER BRUTAL INCIDENT SPAWNED THE BATMAN, IT'S BEEN EXPUNGED FROM THE RECORDS.
HE'S ABOVE THE LAW, MAX, AND WE MUST RISE TO THE OCCASION-- CONFRONT HIM ON HIS LEVEL-- FIGHT FIRE, MAX... WITH FIRE.
YEAH...?
GORDON'S HELPING HIM, MAX, SO I NEED YOUR HELP...
... AND YOU NEED MINE.
I'VE MADE SOMETHING TO HELP US, MAX, SOMETHING TO HELP YOU... HELP ME.

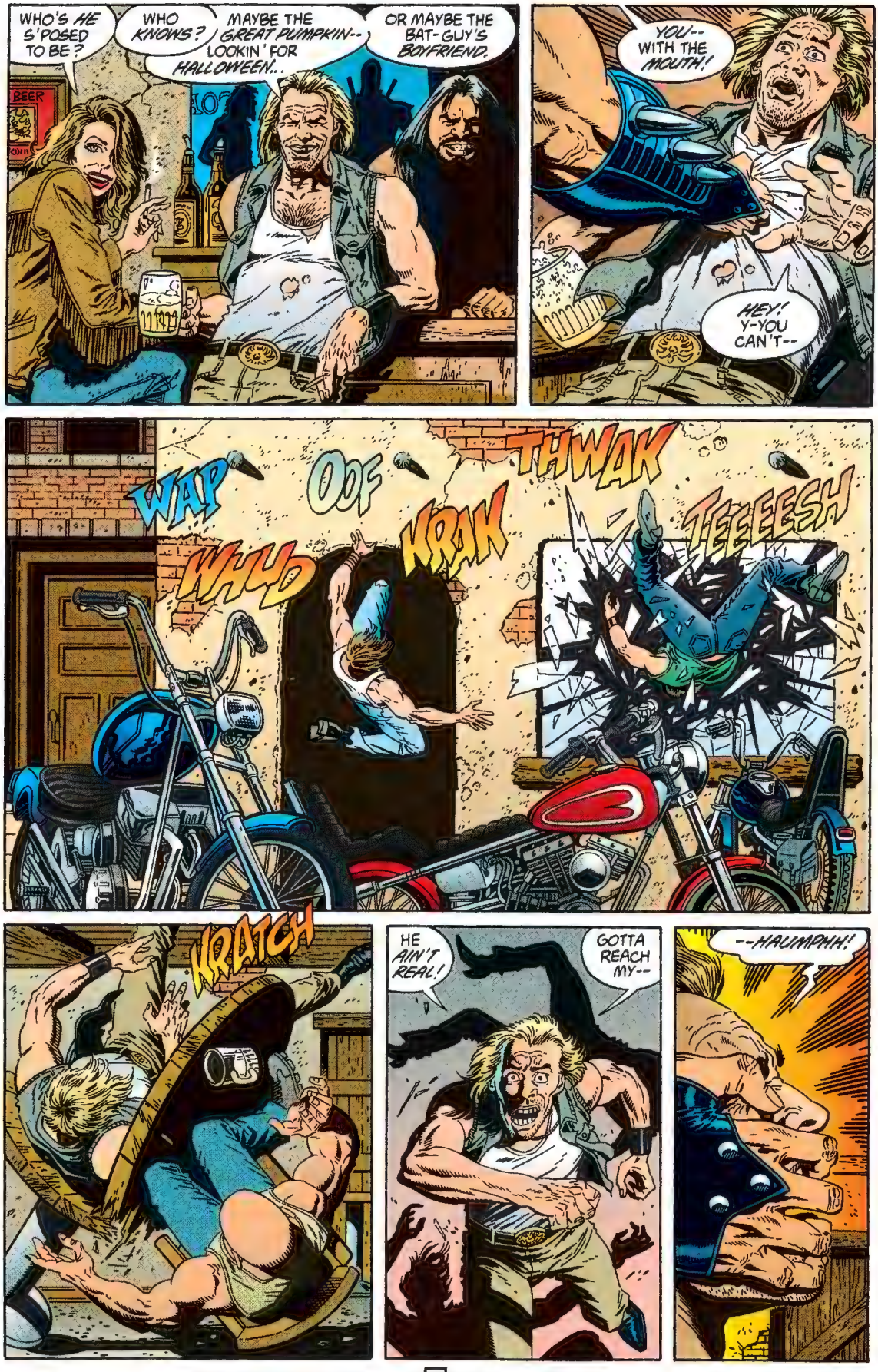

HE'S THE NIGHT, MAX.
THE BATMAN IS THE NIGHT... AND WE'VE GOT TO CLEANSE THE NIGHT... GOT TO BE THE SCOURGE OF NIGHT.
A... COSTUME?
THERE'S STRENGTH IN COSTUMES, MAX--DARK POWER--POWER ENOUGH TO RID GOTHAM OF THE BATMAN FOREVER.
BUT... HOW DO WE FIND HIM...?
I'LL KEEP WORKING ON THAT, MAX. BUT HE'LL COME TO US IF WE CAN DISCREDIT HIM--PROVE HE'S NOTHING SPECIAL...
...BY CLEANSING THE NIGHT IN GENERAL, MAX... BY SHOWING HIM UP AND BREAKING HIM DOWN... PSYCHOLOGICALLY, MAX...
I... I DON'T...
SCOURGE THE NIGHT, MAX... BECOME MORE THAN HIM... BECOME OUR OWN MYTH...
YOU CAN DO IT, MAX... YOU CAN DO IT.
YOU'RE REFRESHED... AT YOUR PEAK... WITH A PURPOSE.
BUT THE WHOLE THING... SEEMS CRAZY, DOC...
AH, BUT MAX, MAX, MAX... THE BATMAN IS CRAZY, ISN'T HE?
YEAH... BUT... I'M NOT... THE BATMAN...
OF COURSE NOT, BUT IF YOU JUST PUT YOUR MIND TO IT, YOU CAN BE BETTER.
NOW GO, MAX... INTO THE NIGHT.
can't worry about it now.
The night is getting darker.
NOT TIRED AT ALL--NO SENSE GOING HOME...
...NOT WHEN I CAN TAKE CARE OF SOME BUSINESS... THE KIND USUALLY SQUASHED BY RULES AND REGULATIONS... BEFORE HUGO STRANGE GAVE ME THE KEY, ANYWAY...
...AND AFTER A QUICK STOP AT THE PRECINCT, I'M GOING TO TURN IT.

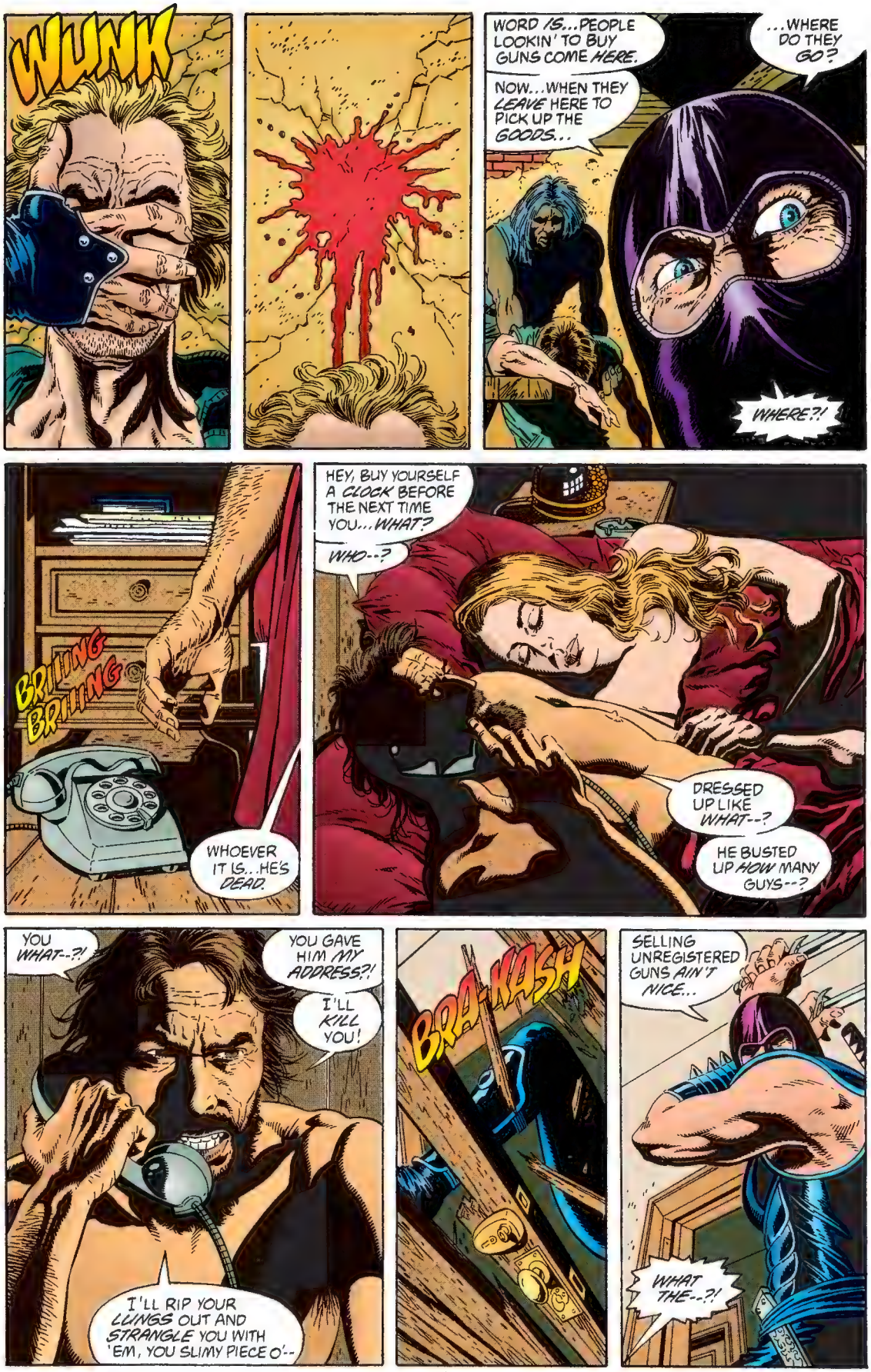
I'll go to Gordon only when I have a plan...
...or only when I have to.
But right now...
WE'RE CLOSED FOR THE NIGHT.
HIM--!
KILL THE--
THAP
CHAT
KUNCH

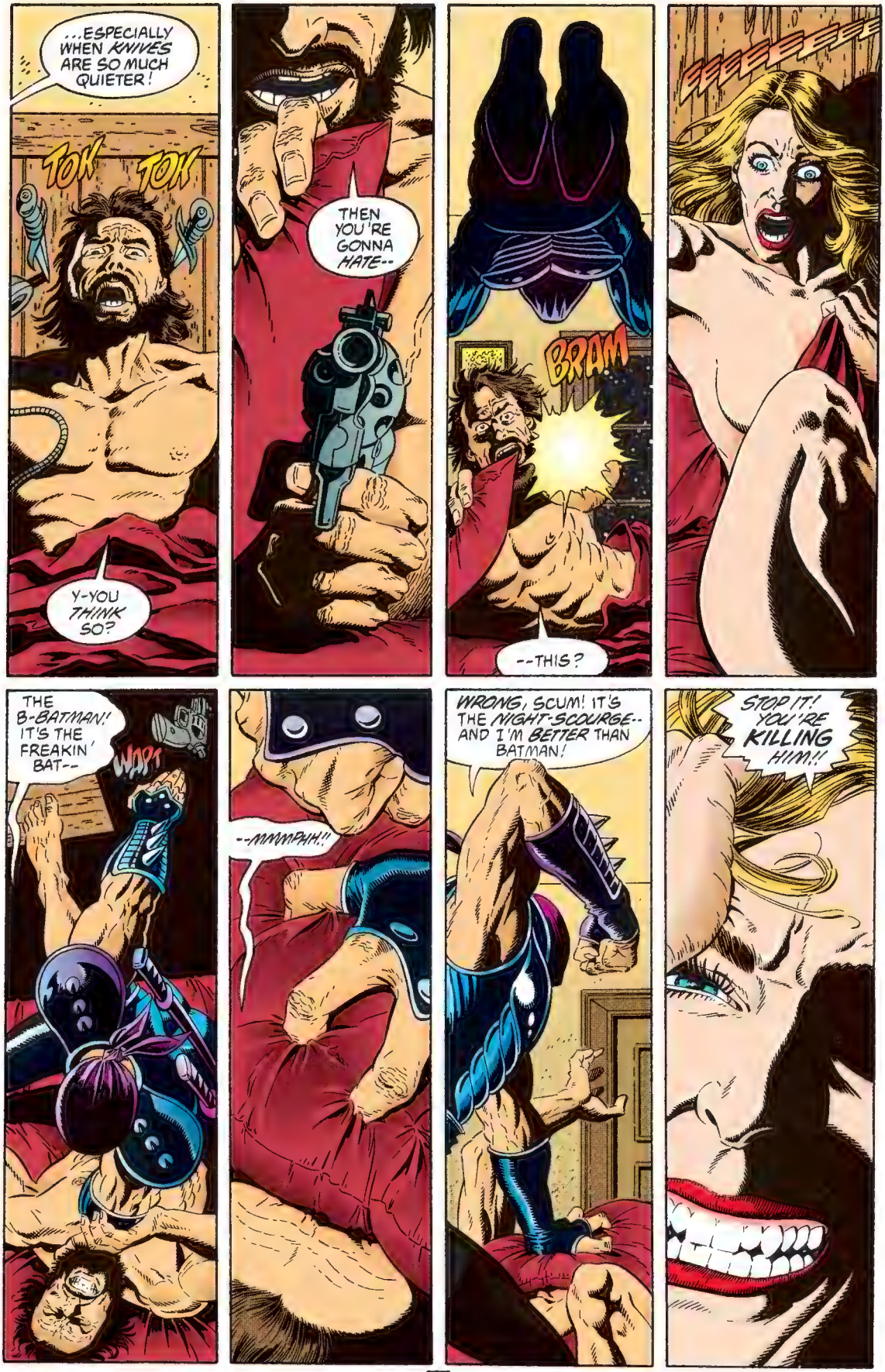
CHUFF
KNOK
HEY!
LET--
SWAKT
--GUH-H!
SHUMP
Punks.
Always looking for kicks.
Until they get them.

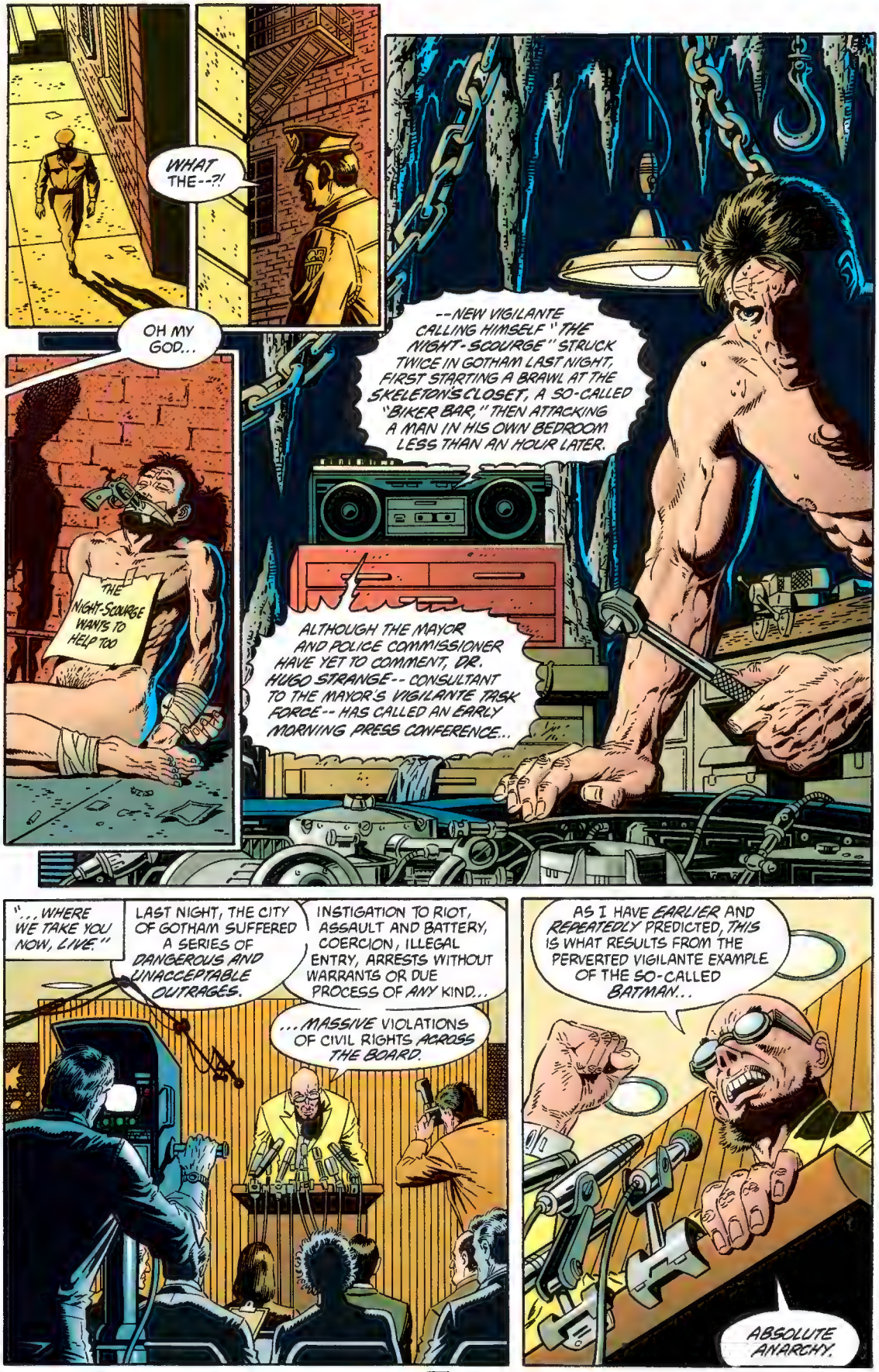
YEAH... THIS'LL DO.
THIS'LL DO REAL GOOD...
TOK!
THE VIGILANTE'S WORK...
AGAIN.
YO, BRISCOE, WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT FILE ON THAT BAR, THE SKELETON'S CLOSET?
CORT TOOK IT.
MAX CORT--? BUT HE'S WORKIN' THE VIGILANTE TASK FORCE NOW.
WHAT'S THE BATMAN GOT TO DO WITH THE SUSPECTED ARMS SMUGGLING CASE WE GOT ON THE SKELETON'S CLOSET?
MAYBE CORT'S FOUND HIMSELF A DIFFERENT VIGILANTE TO TAKE ON THOSE CREEPS.
GOTHAM POLICE
GET SERIOUS.
I AM SERIOUS, AND KNOWIN' CORT...


"... HE'LL FIND A WAY."
PREY: PART THREE
NIGHT SCOURGE!
Doug Moench: Writer Paul Gulacy: Penciller Terry Austin: Inker
John Costanza: Letterer Steve Oliff: Colorist Helfer/Conley: Editors
I'D OFFER TO TAKE ON EVERY MAN IN THE HOUSE...
...IF THIS HELLHOLE WAS GOOD ENOUGH TO PASS FOR A HOUSE...
...AND IF THERE WERE ANY MEN IN IT.
SPASO
MY, MY.

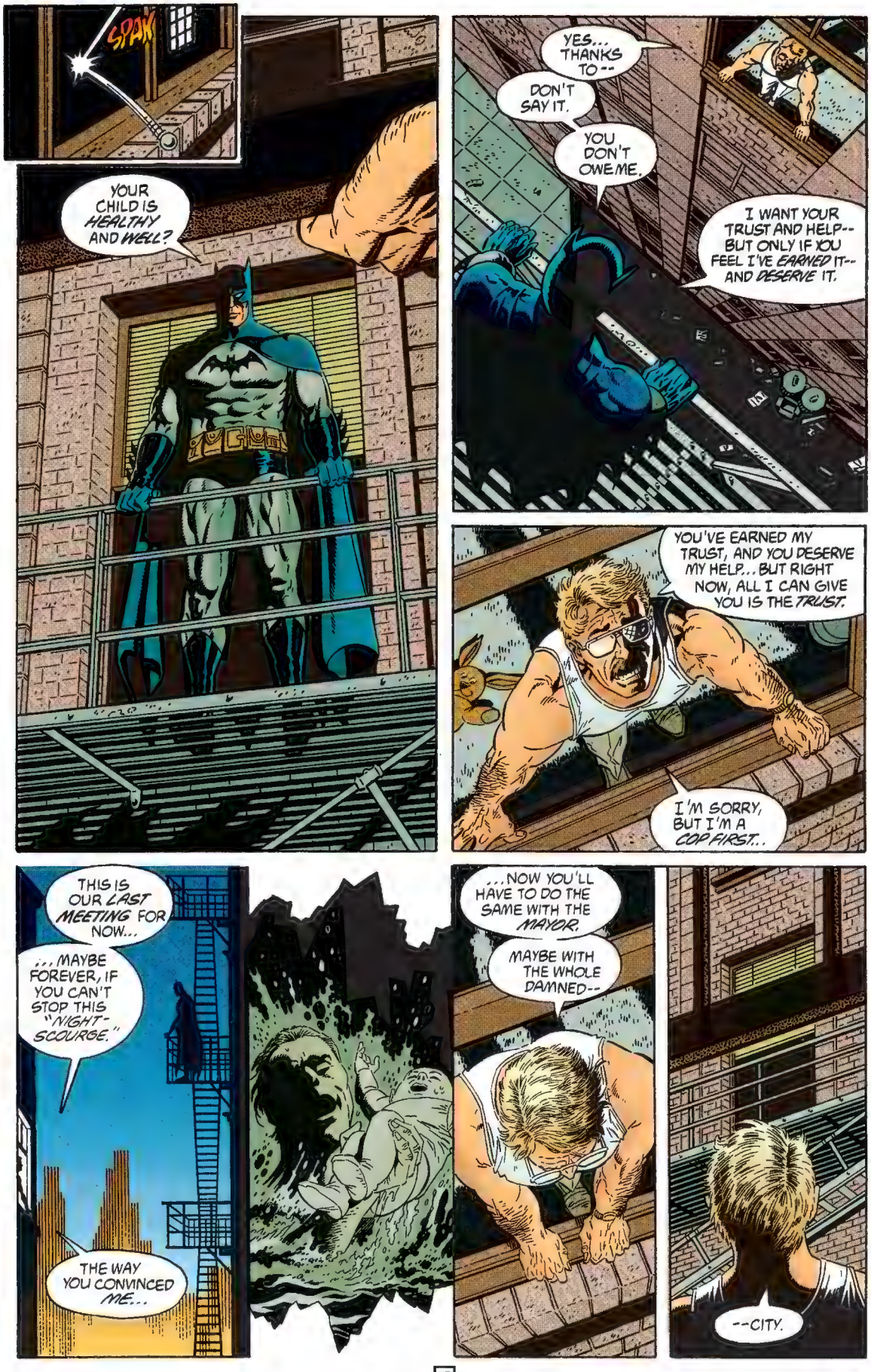

WHO'S HE S'POSED TO BE?
WHO KNOWS?
MAYBE THE GREAT PUMPKIN-- LOOKIN' FOR HALLOWEEN..
OR MAYBE THE BAT-GUY'S BOYFRIEND.
BEER
YOU-- WITH THE MOUTH!
HEY! Y-YOU CAN'T--
WAP
OOF
WHUD
KRAK
THWAK
TEEEESH
KRATCH
HE AIN'T REAL!
GOTTA REACH MY--
--HAUMPHH!


WUNK
WORD IS...PEOPLE LOOKIN' TO BUY GUNS COME HERE.
NOW...WHEN THEY LEAVE HERE TO PICK UP THE GOODS...
...WHERE DO THEY GO?
WHERE?!
BRRLING BRRLING
WHOEVER IT IS...HE'S DEAD.
HEY, BUY YOURSELF A CLOCK BEFORE THE NEXT TIME YOU...WHAT?
WHO--?
DRESSED UP LIKE WHAT--?
HE BUSTED UP HOW MANY GUYS--?
YOU WHAT--?!
YOU GAVE HIM MY ADDRESS?!
I'LL KILL YOU!
I'LL RIP YOUR LUNGS OUT AND STRANGLE YOU WITH 'EM, YOU SLIMY PIECE O'--
BRA-KASH
SELLING UNREGISTERED GUNS AIN'T NICE...
WHAT THE--?!

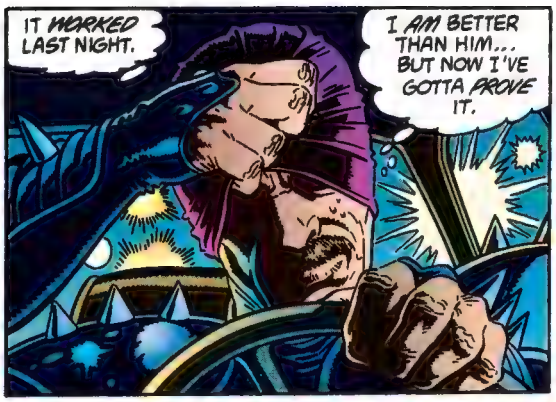

...ESPECIALLY WHEN KNIVES ARE SO MUCH QUIETER!
TOK
TOK
Y-YOU THINK SO?
THEN YOU'RE GONNA HATE--
BRAM
--THIS?
EEEEEEE
THE B-BATMAN! IT'S THE FREAKIN' BAT--
WAPT
--MMMPHH!!
WRONG, SCUM! IT'S THE NIGHT-SCOURGE-- AND I'M BETTER THAN BATMAN!
STOP IT! YOU'RE KILLING HIM!!


WHAT THE--?!
OH MY GOD...
THE NIGHT-SCOURGE WANTS TO HELP TOO
--NEW VIGILANTE CALLING HIMSELF "THE NIGHT-SCOURGE" STRUCK TWICE IN GOTHAM LAST NIGHT, FIRST STARTING A BRAWL AT THE SKELETON'S CLOSET, A SO-CALLED "BIKER BAR," THEN ATTACKING A MAN IN HIS OWN BEDROOM LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER.
ALTHOUGH THE MAYOR AND POLICE COMMISSIONER HAVE YET TO COMMENT, DR. HUGO STRANGE-- CONSULTANT TO THE MAYOR'S VIGILANTE TASK FORCE-- HAS CALLED AN EARLY MORNING PRESS CONFERENCE...
"...WHERE WE TAKE YOU NOW, LIVE."
LAST NIGHT, THE CITY OF GOTHAM SUFFERED A SERIES OF DANGEROUS AND UNACCEPTABLE OUTRAGES.
INSTIGATION TO RIOT, ASSAULT AND BATTERY, COERCION, ILLEGAL ENTRY, ARRESTS WITHOUT WARRANTS OR DUE PROCESS OF ANY KIND...
...MASSIVE VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACROSS THE BOARD.
AS I HAVE EARLIER AND REPEATEDLY PREDICTED, THIS IS WHAT RESULTS FROM THE PERVERTED VIGILANTE EXAMPLE OF THE SO-CALLED BATMAN...
ABSOLUTE ANARCHY.

WE CANNOT TOLERATE ANY FURTHER NIGHT-SCOURGES! IT MUST STOP! INDEED, IF I WERE A TWISTED, TORMENTED SOUL LIKE THE BATMAN..
-- I WOULD SURRENDER MYSELF TO SOMEONE LIKE ME FOR IMMEDIATE TREATMENT--
--BEFORE ANY OTHERS GET THE IDEA OF EMULATING HIS SICK EXAMPLE!
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, MASTER BRUCE...
THE BATMAN IS A MAD DOG--
"...VIOLENCE BEGETS...
--RUNNING WILD IN THE STREETS!
"...VIOLENCE."
HE MUST BE STOPPED!
...I have to go to him.
Getting cold.
Better shut it.
HE MUST BE DE--
NO.
KLIK
Can't take the bait.
But now... even without a plan...
He's so small and soft... so vulnerable...and soon, the sirens will start.
Can't let the night invade his peace...

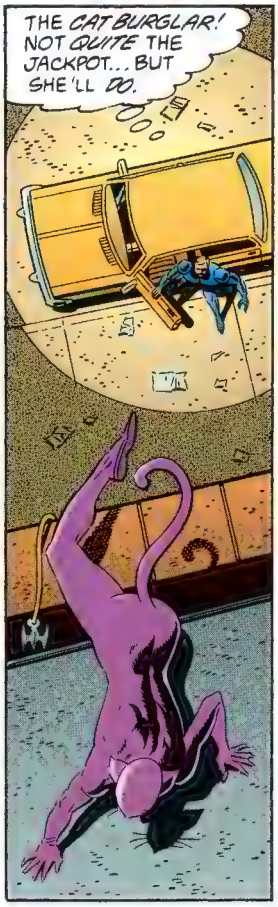

SPAK
YOUR CHILD IS HEALTHY AND WELL?
YES... THANKS TO--
DON'T SAY IT.
YOU DON'T OWE ME.
I WANT YOUR TRUST AND HELP-- BUT ONLY IF YOU FEEL I'VE EARNED IT-- AND DESERVE IT.
YOU'VE EARNED MY TRUST, AND YOU DESERVE MY HELP... BUT RIGHT NOW, ALL I CAN GIVE YOU IS THE TRUST.
I'M SORRY, BUT I'M A COP FIRST...
THIS IS OUR LAST MEETING FOR NOW...
...MAYBE FOREVER, IF YOU CAN'T STOP THIS "NIGHT-SCOURGE."
THE WAY YOU CONVINCED ME...
...NOW YOU'LL HAVE TO DO THE SAME WITH THE MAYOR.
MAYBE WITH THE WHOLE DAMNED--
--CITY.

MROWRRR?
YES-- THE NIGHT CALLS.


IT WORKED LAST NIGHT.
I AM BETTER THAN HIM... BUT NOW I'VE GOTTA PROVE IT.

Should have known.
Gordon can't help me now... not without a plan.

THERE-- IT'S HIM!
OR... NO... A WOMAN...


THE CAT BURGLAR! NOT QUITE THE JACKPOT... BUT SHE'LL DO.

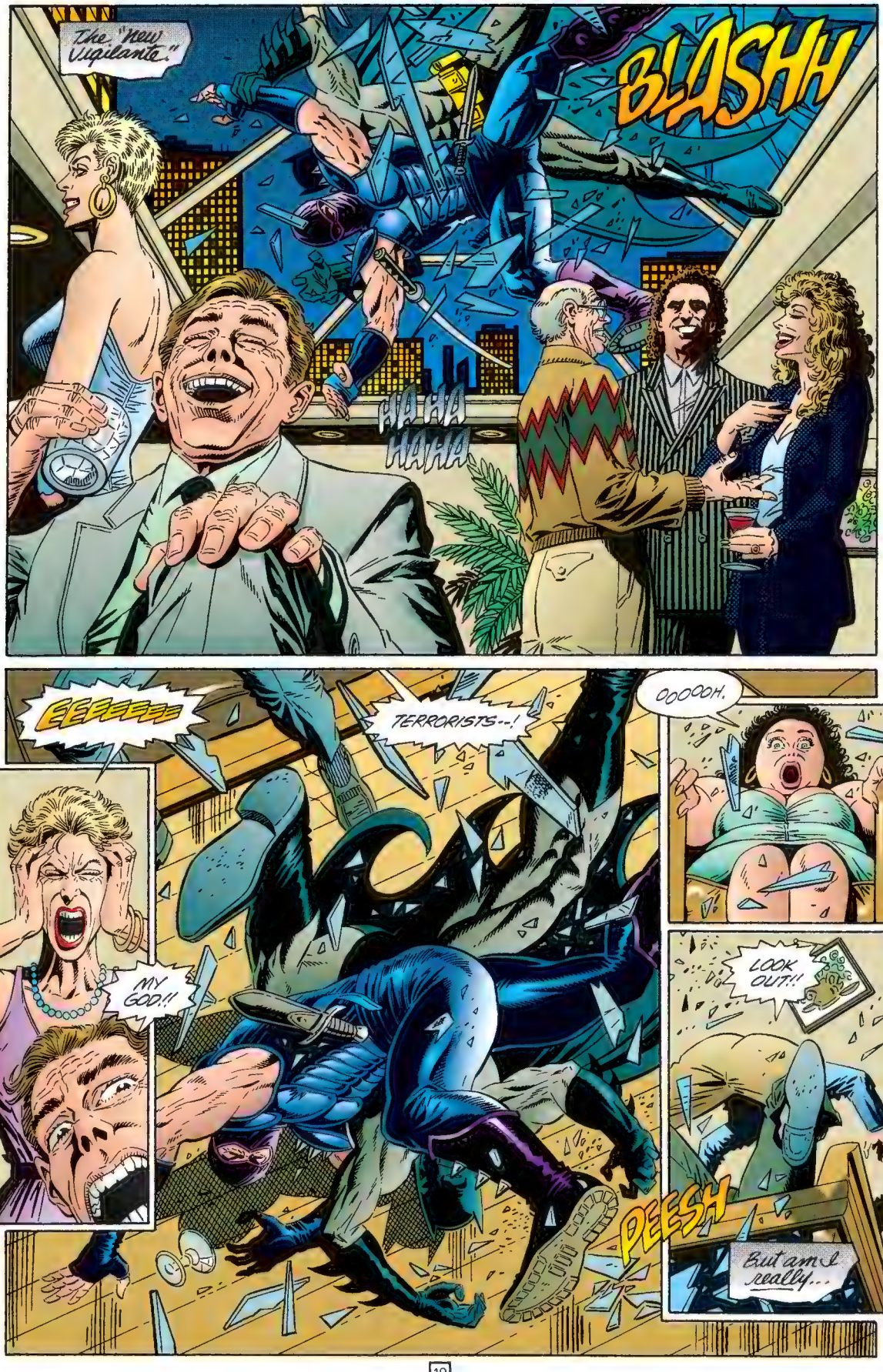
FROM THE SOUNDS...
EXIT

...A BIG BASH...

...WITH LOTS OF GUESTS...
EXIT
...LOTS OF JEWELRY...

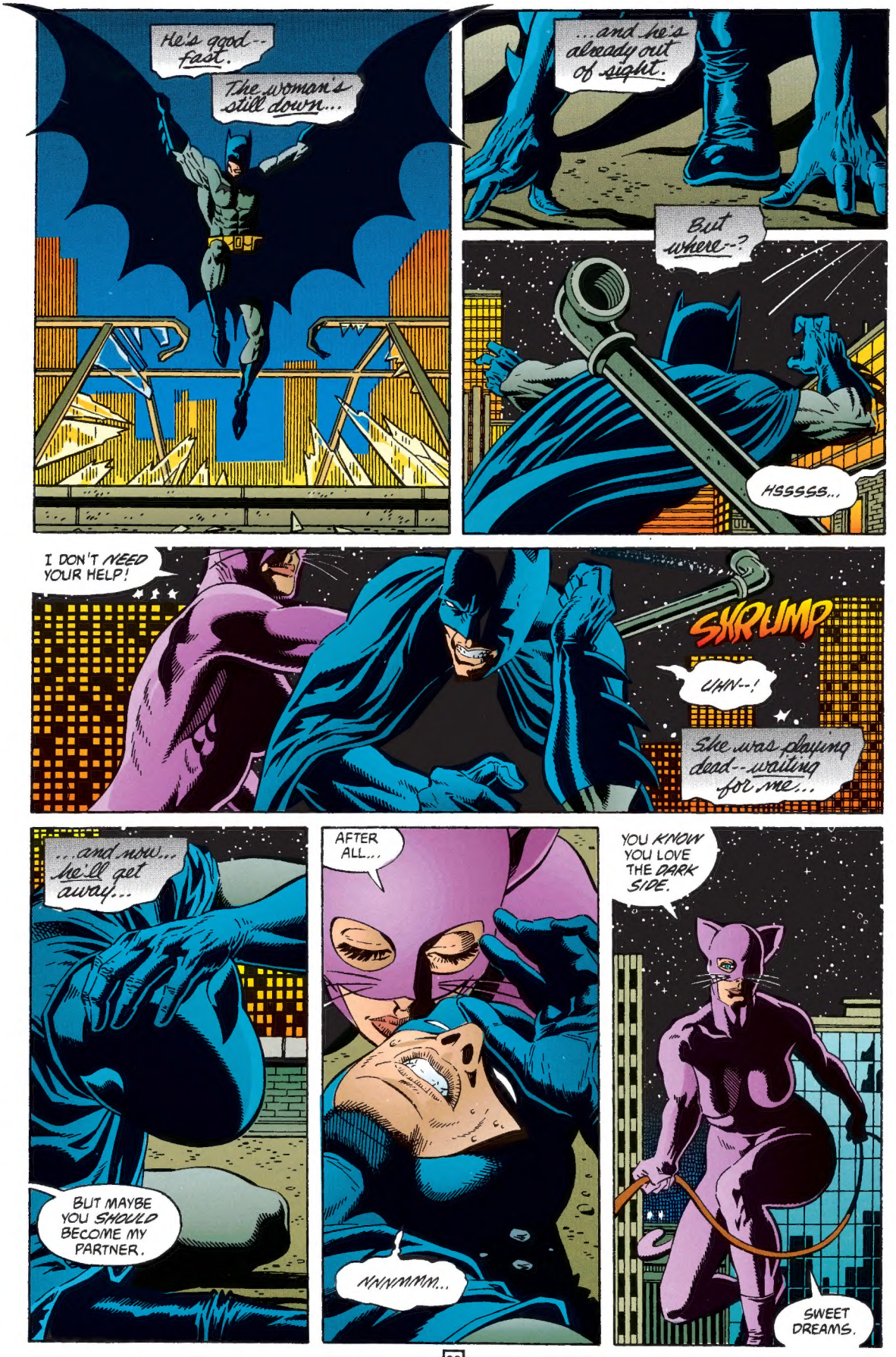
HWOK
WHY CRASH THE PARTY, BABE?--
--WHEN WE CAN THROW DOWN RIGHT UP--
--HERE!
K.T.A
NKT
BECAUSE...
SKUD
...YOU'RE NOT WEARING JEWELRY.
--FELT LIKE I BLUNDERED INTO A NASTY FAIRYTALE OF BULLS AND BEARS.
THE STOCK MARKET KICKED MY BUTT.
SHUMPT

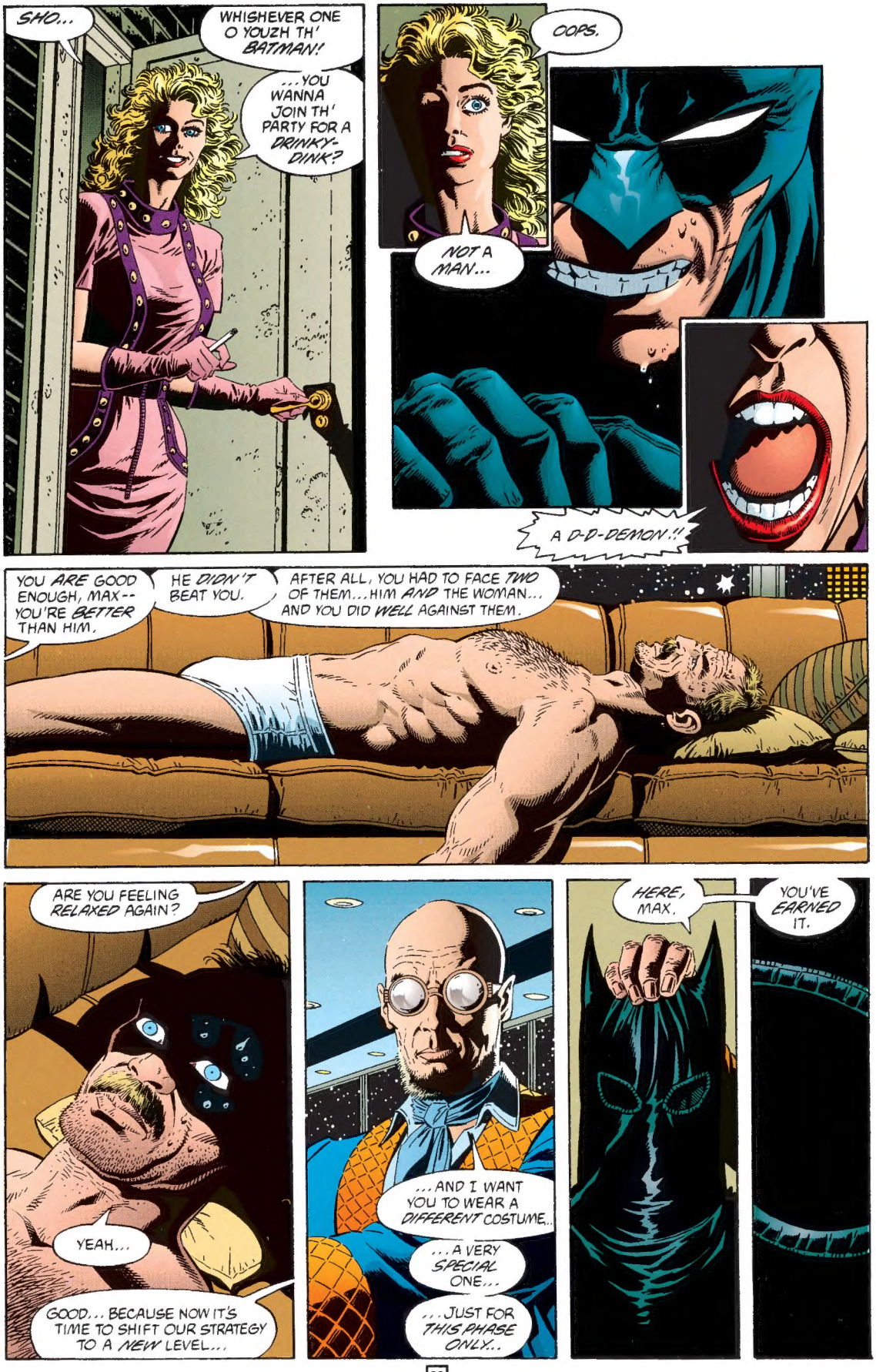
THD
AHN--!
N-NO--!
FRAKT
WHUPT
NNNNNO...
TIME TO CLEAN UP THE NIGHT, BABE...
...AND YOU'RE THE FILTH!
The "Night-Scourge."
It must be.


The "new vigilante."
BLASHH
HA HA HA HA
EEEEEE
TERRORISTS--!
MY GOD!!
OOOOOH.
LOOK OUT!!
PEESH
But am I really...

...like him?
YOU--!
THEN YOU AND THE WOMAN--THE CAT-BURGLAR--YOU ARE PARTNERS!
BUT IT DOESN'T MATTER! I'LL TAKE YOU BOTH DOWN--IN THE SAME NIGHT!
SWAK
FRAKK
SWOKK
NINE-ONE-ONE!
CALL THE POLICE!
WAP
CHUD
DUFT
KRATCH

:NNNGH:
AHN--!
SKUHT
NO! DON'T CALL THE POLICE!
IT'S THAT BAT-GUY! IT'S HIM!
STRANGE WAS WRONG...
I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH...
...NOT YET...
I'M NOT THE BATMAN!


He's good -- fast.
The woman's still down...
...and he's already out of sight.
But where--?
HSSSSS...
I DON'T NEED YOUR HELP!
SKRUMP
UHN--!
She was playing dead--waiting for me...
...and now... he'll get away...
BUT MAYBE YOU SHOULD BECOME MY PARTNER.
AFTER ALL...
MMMMMM...
YOU KNOW YOU LOVE THE DARK SIDE.
SWEET DREAMS.


SHO...
WHISHEVER ONE O YOUZH TH' BATMAN!
...YOU WANNA JOIN TH' PARTY FOR A DRINKY-DINK?
OOPS.
NOT A MAN...
A D-D-DEMON.!!
YOU ARE GOOD ENOUGH, MAX-- YOU'RE BETTER THAN HIM.
HE DIDN'T BEAT YOU.
AFTER ALL, YOU HAD TO FACE TWO OF THEM...HIM AND THE WOMAN... AND YOU DID WELL AGAINST THEM.
ARE YOU FEELING RELAXED AGAIN?
YEAH...
GOOD... BECAUSE NOW IT'S TIME TO SHIFT OUR STRATEGY TO A NEW LEVEL...
...AND I WANT YOU TO WEAR A DIFFERENT COSTUME...
...A VERY SPECIAL ONE...
...JUST FOR THIS PHASE ONLY...
HERE, MAX.
YOU'VE EARNED IT.

:HIIIIHH:
NOT A SOUND.
SWAK
SEEEEEEE
WHAT THE--?
CATHERINE--?!
MY GOD.
CATHERINE!
WHAT HAPPENED TO--
KRUKT
AUGH-K

YOU EVER WANT TO SEE HER AGAIN, MR. MAYOR... CALL OFF YOUR DOGS.
GOTHAM IS MINE.
THE... B-BATMAN....
Can't see... can barely hear...
Sounds like... all the noises of hell...
...shrieks and laughter...
...booms and squawks...
...alligators playing trombones...
...like...
...like the party... will never end...
NEXT: THE NIGHTMARE